

Kārnāma-i 'Ishq, which seems hitherto to have escaped literary notice, is a romantic fairy-story of the type beloved of Indian writers, in which a young prince, Gauhar, becomes enamoured of a lady who has been changed into a gazelle, and after encounters with fairies and surviving numerous perilous adventures, he is eventually united with her in her original form. The work was composed in 1731 and dedicated to the Emperor Muhammad Shāh, and this Ms. appears to be the dedication copy. It was copied by one Harko La'l in 1148/1735 but a note on the flyleaf signed by the author and dated 1151/1738-9 records that the artist Govardhan took five years to complete the miniatures. This artist appears to have been one of the leaders of the Mughal school at the period, with both attributed work and work in his style now known.² There are 37 miniatures, of which the first is a double-portrait of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh with his vizier Qamar ad-Dīn (f.7b), while the remainder illustrate the text. They are splendid examples of the best Delhi style of the period, which is usually found in isolated court scenes rather than in manuscripts.³ Govardhan's work has the sureness of technique of the best 17th-century work, but a hardness of line and an icy stiffness and formality that is divorced from the much softer technique of the previous century. The cool palette of greys and greens combined with splashes of brilliant colour is typical of the Muhammad Shāh style.

India Office Library, London, Johnson Album 38.

Provenance: Richard Johnson Collection, acquired in 1807.

ff.123; 39.5×25cm; fine creamy paper; 13 lines of *Nasta'liq* in panels 22×13cm with margins ruled in gold; fine *sarlavh*, very tall, mostly gold with floral arabesques; 37 miniatures, some full-page, but usually size of text panels; Indian covers.

Bibliography: IOL 1981, p.313.

¹BM 1876, p.997; Garcin de Tassy 1870-1, p.376; Elliot and Dowson, VIII, p.76.

²IOL 1981, pp.109-111.

³See for example Welch 1978, plate 39.

107 'Pādshāhnāma'

The History of the Emperor (Shāh Jahān) by Muhammad 'Amin Qazvīnī (see No.82).

In 1815, the 'King of Delhi', i.e. Akbar II, presented to J.T. Roberdean, acting judge and magistrate of Allahabad, two volumes containing the history of Shāh Jahān, the first being the work of Muhammad 'Amin on the first ten years, the second¹ being that of Muhammad Salih Kanbū from the 11th year of the reign to the death of the deposed Emperor (see No.137). They are splendidly illumi-



107 ff.689b, 690. Shāh Jahān on the Peacock Throne being offered pearls during an entertainment.

nated in the style of Delhi about 1800.

No attempt was made in these or similar Mss. to match the scale and number of illustrations in the *Pādshāhnāma* of 1657 (No.82) – there are 44 in the Windsor Ms. and at least 111 more in other collections, all of them of superb quality, whereas the later Mss. have a maximum of 30 paintings of much smaller scale and achievement.² They give the impression of being worked to a rigid formula and it may be assumed they were. Numerous paintings in the different manuscripts are of the same scenes, including in particular paintings of the great architectural monuments built by Shāh Jahān – the Tāj Mahāl, the Red Fort in Delhi and its white marble buildings, the Delhi Jāmī Masjid etc. Whatever was the original of this stereotype, it does not appear to be the imperial Ms., which contains no scene precisely similar to these, nor does it contain any paintings of the architecture of Shāh Jahān's reign. By 1776 it had in any case left Delhi for Lucknow. The conclusion is inescapable that they were all produced as presents for the Europeans, who were fascinated by the pomp and state of the former Mughals and by their buildings, which in the early 19th century were being widely painted by both British and Indian artists. The later Mss. of this type even have figures of Europeans admiring the

buildings (No.137).

British Library, London, Add.20734.

Provenance: Earl of Munster Collection, acquired 1855.

ff.445; 39.5×23cm; creamy paper; 15 lines *Nasta'liq* in panels 26.5×14.5cm, with margins ruled in gold and colours; one *unwān*; four single-page and five double-page miniatures, of about same size as text panels, all with border illuminations; sumptuous 19th-century European binding.

Bibliography: BM 1879, p.259. BL 1977, p.125.

¹British Library Add. 20735.

²The paintings in a Ms. of the *Pādshāhnāma* in the Khuda Baksh Library have been published in full – see OPLB 1920.

108 'Bāburnāma'

Memoirs of Bābur (see No.62).

This manuscript would appear to be a composite, made up around the remnants of a manuscript of this text of the 1590s. The Persian translation used is that of 'Abd ar-Rahīm Khānkhānān, which was not completed until 1589. The clearly expressed date of this manuscript, 937/1530, the year of Bābur's death, must therefore be a deliberate forgery, as is the addition of a page of imperial Mughal

seals at the beginning including one of Humāyūn's dated 934/1527. However, some of the remaining 19 paintings as well as part of the text are original, the rest of the text being written by the scribe 'Alī al-Kātib in imitation of the usual large *Nasta'liq* found in *Bāburnāma* Mss.

The original Mughal paintings are not very distinguished examples of the 1590s, whereas a few of the added paintings are splendid examples of Delhi work about 1800, including a wonderfully anachronistic one of Bābur in 1526 visiting the sights of Delhi including the tomb of Nizammudin, which is shown to be the splendid marble affair erected by Shāh Jahān in the mid-17th century! After its arrival in Alwar, the manuscript was re-margined throughout with marbled paper borders in greens, browns and blues, and finely rebound by 'Abd ar-Rahmān.

Government Museum, Alwar.

ff.458; 31×20cm; paper of text panels light beige, and gold sprinkled; 12 lines of large *Nasta'liq* in panels c.20×13cm with margins ruled in gold and colours; borders all of marbled paper, 19th century; 19 miniatures; double-page *unwān*, with panels of illumination in text at end, all c.1800; Alwar binding, covers stamped and gilded, doubleures red leather with stamped gold medallions.

Bibliography: Alwar 1961, p.98. MIC, pp.95-6.

109 'Qur'an'

Illustrated on p.112.

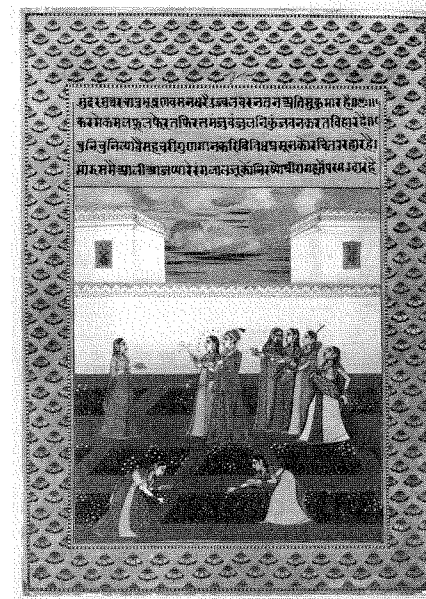
The Holy Koran.

This unascrbed manuscript was purchased by Mahārāja Rao Vinay Singh of Alwar (1815-57) from a passing Muslim for the sum of Rs3,000 and a dress of honour, and is one of the most sumptuous of all 19th-century copies of the Koran. Every page bears the most elaborate border decorations in alternate dark and light blue panels within gold arabesques. The place of production is not noted but was probably Delhi. The Ms. was bound in Alwar by 'Abd ar-Rahmān.

Government Museum, Alwar, MS.784.

ff.472; 30×18cm; paper; 12 lines of *Naskhī*, dark blue with white shading, on gold, surrounded by arabesques within panels with broad gold margins; sublinear Persian translation in red *Nasta'liq*; chapter headings in light-blue *Thuluth* repeated at top of each text panel; commentary written in minute letters diagonally around main text panel; outer wide border of illumination on every page; covers stamped and painted in gold and blue with marginal cartouches.

Bibliography: Hendley 1888, plate LXXI. Alwar 1961, pp.97-8.



110 f.4. *Śrī rāga*, the hero walking with his beloved. By Bahādur Singh.

110 'Rāgamālā'

Six paintings mounted in an album depicting *rāgas* and *rāgiṇīs*, with descriptive verses in *Braj-bhāṣā* Hindi by Pyāre Rangalāla, who is possibly to be identified with the court poet of the same name of Surajmall of Bharatpur, who flourished about 1754.

The verses of the six *rāgas* are somewhat different in conception from other *Rāgamālā* sets, and hence needed a different iconography for the paintings. All six of the paintings are attributed, to Sital Dās, Girdhārī La'l, and Bahādur Singh, in neat *Nasta'liq* at the bottom of the pictures. Another Persian inscription in the top margin identifies the *rāga* subjects, which are of course identified in the Hindi verses. The paintings are conceived as a single unit with their elaborately decorated margins, instead of being laid into a mount as was usually the case.

The work of all three artists is in the standard Lucknow manner of the late 18th century, and probably dates from about 1780. Bahādur Singh seems the most animated of the three in this by then somewhat lifeless school.

These six paintings, and another two in the Bodleian Library (in Album Or.b.2), are all that remain of a highly-finished set, of which the complete preliminary drawings are in the India Office Library (Johnson Album 44), probably commissioned by Richard Johnson in Lucknow in 1780-82.¹ Sital Dās did work for Johnson in these years² and Bahādur Singh is a well-known artist of the period.

British Library, London, Add.21934.

Provenance: ex-Dr Solander's collection; acquired from I.R. Isaac in 1857.

ff.6; 25×17cm; paper; text in black *Nāgarī* on a gold ground in four lines in panels 5×13cm above the paintings; surrounded by gold margins with floral decoration; bound in a European-style album.

Bibliography: BM 1899, Hindi, 95.

Gangoly 1934-5, who reproduces all six pages.

¹IOL 1981, No.351.

²*ibid.*, p.136.

111 Album of Hāfiz Rahmat Khān

Illustrated on p.110.

An album of paintings and calligraphy assembled probably in the third quarter of the 18th century, perhaps in Lucknow, but more likely in the library of the Rohilla chief Hāfiz Rahmat Khān, from whose library in Bareilly it was taken, according to a note on the flyleaf, after the attack on the Rohillas by the forces of the East India Company and the Nawab of Oudh in 1774.

The 31 paintings are mostly of the Lucknow style c.1750-70, with examples of earlier Mughal work, as well as two fine Lucknow copies of a Mughal painting of the early Akbar period showing Humāyūn in a camp, and of Akbar in darbar about 1600. The covers are splendid examples of Lucknow work of the 1760s, boards painted with hunting scenes in a fairy landscape in gold, and lacquered.

British Museum, London, 1974.6-17.010 (formerly Add.22470).

ff.32; 38×28cm; stiffened paper; 31 paintings and 33 calligraphic specimens mounted in frames; pasteboard covers, painted and lacquered.

Bibliography: BM 1876, p.785. BL 1977, p.16.

112 'Dastūr-i Himmat'

Illustrated on p.111.

The Model of Resolution, a poetical version of the story of Kāmarūpa and Kāmalatā, written in 1685 by Muhammad Murād, who named it after his patron, Himmat Khān Mīr 'Isā, one of Aurangzīb's officials, who died in Ajmer in 1681.

The story concerns a prince of Oudh, Kāmarūpa, and a princess of Serendip (Ceylon), Kāmalatā, who simultaneously dream of each other and fall passionately in love. Kāmarūpa sets out to find his beloved, and after many adventures including shipwreck, finds Ceylon and his princess, who chooses him as her husband in a *swayamvara* organized by her father.

The Ms. is undated, but on the evidence of its illustrations can be assigned to Murshidabad about 1760. There are 209 in all, of which 23 are full-page. Many



114 Inside cover. Dancing devotees of Krishna.

of them are of ambitious scope for this period of manuscript-illustration with compositions in depth. Palace scenes with activities in foreground and background, viewed from the traditional aerial viewpoint, and with fairly rigid lines of perspective, are a feature of individual paintings of the period but are rarely seen in manuscripts. Also of great interest are some ambitious attempts at foreshortening, as when an army of horsemen is viewed head on from above, and depictions of ships and shipwreck.

The Ms. is of the richest appearance, with every page decorated lavishly with gold and brilliant colouring. The appearance of Prince Kāmarūpa might be taken as a flattering portrait of Sirāj ad-Daula (1756-7) whose beauty was famed throughout Bengal.¹ The attendant figures, however, have a tendency towards dumpiness which appears to be a stylistic trait of a slightly later period, c.1760. However, we need not hesitate to regard the Ms. as a royal Murshidabad creation of c.1755-65.

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ind. MS.12.

ff.197; 33 × 20.3cm; paper, pale-cream in colour; 17 lines of *Nasta'liq* in two columns in panels 25.5 × 12cm with margins ruled in gold and colours; text in white clouds against gold; one *sarlavh*; 209 miniatures, of which 23 are full-page, and the others smaller than the text panels, while some are tailpieces with animals and plants; original covers of papier-mâché, painted and lacquered, with lattice design filled with flowers.

Bibliography: CB 1936, pp.63-71.

¹Skelton 1956.

113 'Razmnāma'

Illustrated on p.111.

The Book of Wars, the Persian translation by Nakīb Khān and others, of the Sanskrit epic *Mahābhārata* (see No.88).

Akbar's desire that the mutual understanding he hoped for between Muslims and Hindus could be brought about by their knowing each other's sacred books did not alas come to fruition in the intolerance practiced by his successors. However, the chief monument to Akbar's hopes, the *Razmnāma*, was still often copied in the next two centuries, though seldom illustrated. This copy is in three uniform volumes, and is dated Moradabad 1175-7/1761-3. It was copied for one Rae Bahādūr Singh, by Muhammad Khān, an Afghan Shirvānī from Thatta, and has 134 illustrations all painted on card with floral margins and bound in. They are numbered in large Roman numerals.

Moradabad lies 100 miles east of Delhi and was founded about 1625 and named after Murād Baksh, one of the sons of Shāh Jahān. From 1740 it was part of the Rohilla dominions, under the control of the Rohilla chief Hāfiz Rahmat, who kept a well-stocked library in Bareilly. However, Moradabad is not known as a centre of painting.

By 1775, the volumes had found their way into the collection of Sir Elijah Impey in Calcutta, whose Persian seal with this date is found on the volumes. This strongly suggests that like No.111 they were in Hāfiz Rahmat's library at the time of the attack on the Rohillas in 1774 by the combined forces of the East India Company and Shūja' ad-Daula, Nawab of Oudh. Impey was a patron of artists working in the Murshidabad style as well as of Company artists in Calcutta. The style of these illustrations strongly suggests that Impey had Murshidabad artists

prepare a set and then had them bound in. They are mostly undistinguished work of the period about 1780, when court patronage was largely dead and artists were glad of any work they could get, but towards the end a much more competent painter has contributed work of great loveliness, distinguished particularly by the prominence given to trees in compositions, whether singly or in lovely groups. Late Murshidabad work utilizes various Hindu stylizations for architecture and landscape, in a way foreign to the Lucknow school, although this is not surprising in a work like the *Razmnāma*, where the subjects of the paintings are based on earlier models. A striking feature of the Ms. is the return to a landscape format for many of the pictures, first seen among Persian manuscripts in Akbar's copy of the *Razmnāma* prepared 200 years previously, in which the book has to be turned through 90 degrees to look at the picture. This of course was the traditional shape of Hindu manuscript paintings of Akbar's time; its re-emergence here suggests an as yet unknown tradition of *Razmnāma* illustration going back directly to the archetype.

British Library, London, Add.5638-40.

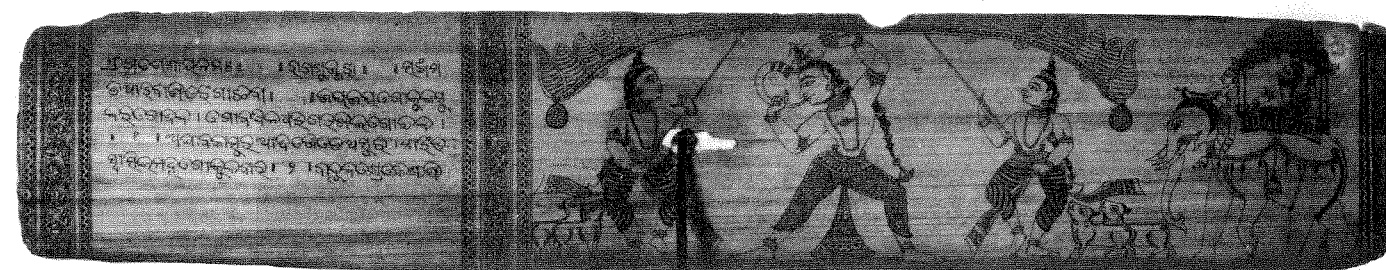
Provenance: Elijah Impey, then N.B. Halhed, from whom they were purchased in 1795-6.

ff.413, 371, and 440; 40 × 25cm; good glazed paper; 22 lines large *Nasta'liq* in panels 30.5 × 14cm with margins ruled in red and black; 134 paintings on paper, laid in frames of heavily painted card and bound in European covers.

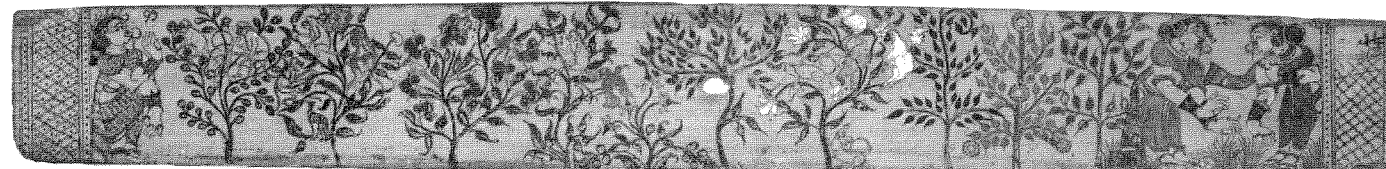
Bibliography: BM 1879, pp.57-8. BL 1977, pp.130-34.

114 Pair of manuscript covers

The text of the Ms. which these covers enclosed is not known, but is said to have



116 f.2b. Krishna lifts Mount Govardhan.



117 f.13. The *gopīs* (cowgirls) ask the trees and shrubs where Krishna has gone.

been dated equivalent to 1647, and was found, like No.32, at Vishnupur in south-western Bengal.

The covers are painted on their exteriors with medallions containing flower and leaf patterns on a ground of flowers. The interiors show on one cover a scene of Krishna approaching a grieving Rādhā, with four female attendants and two deer. On the other is a scene of two young men and an older one dancing to the music of drum and cymbals, obviously devotees of Krishna dancing in his worship. The text of the manuscript must have been a devotional Krishna text, probably the *Gītāgovinda*. By this date the angularity of the 1499 covers has given way to a much smoother line and a more varied rhythm, capable of considerable expressiveness. It is quite possible that this change is due to natural development within the style without any necessity to postulate Mughal influence. The ground is still red and the viewpoint from the horizontal, without any landscape or horizon.

British Museum, 1955, 10-8,06.

Victoria and Albert Museum, I.S.103-1955.

Provenance: found in Bankura District; J.C. French Collection.

Two wooden covers, bevelled edges; 15 × 41cm; painted on upper and lower sides.

Bibliography: AB, No.49, col. repro. of V & A cover.

115 'Gītāgovinda'

The Song of the Cowherd by Jayadeva (see No.37), with the commentary of Nārāyanadāsa.

This manuscript is one of the few finely illustrated examples of Orissan work with a date and full details of provenance. It was written and illustrated during the 39th *anka* of Mukundadeva of Khurda,

c.1690, by Dhananjaya, who very probably also illustrated the *Rādhākṛṣṇakeli* (No.116) in the same style. Unlike this latter manuscript, however, it includes many passages of colour, of red, yellow, blue and green applied mostly to clothes, and sometimes to figures. Krishna is sometimes yellow, sometimes green.

Most scenes take place under stepped pyramidal roofs, supported by pillars either square or rounded, but often with conceits such as faces or diamonds between the ornate base and capital. Both men and women wear their hair in tight chignons on top of the head, or sometimes loose in a pigtail. Krishna often wears a jaunty little hat. They both wear the *dhoti*, and the females have an *oṃhī* wrapped round their upper half, which is inclined to stand out stiffly. Occasionally gentlemen in mid-17th century Mughal costume make an appearance.

Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar, Ext.166.

ff.81; 4 × 29.5cm; palmyra leaves; text in one or two lines in centre with commentary above and below, in incised Oriya script; most folios with incised drawings on both sides; wooden covers with bevelled edges, inlaid with ivory.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

116 'Rādhākṛṣṇakeli'

The Sport of Rādhā and Krishna, a poem in simple Oriya verse composed by Kārttika in the 17th century, based on the *Gītāgovinda* of Jayadeva. It describes Krishna's boyhood and exploits, and then the first meeting in public of Rādhā and Krishna, the arrangements Rādhā makes to fulfil her desires via a go-between, and the eventual union of the two lovers. It is full of pastoral illusions to the river, the flowers and trees, the moon and the birds, all the standard motifs of Indian love poetry.

This lovely little manuscript of this rare work is fully illustrated with incised drawings in the Orissan style; it is undated, but must belong to the earliest group of surviving illustrated manuscripts of Orissa, and is probably the work of Dhananjaya, the illustrator of the *Gītāgovinda* (No.115) c.1690. His work is of the greatest elegance, with a lovely contrast between the extremely detailed drawing of figures and architecture, and the blank leaf behind.

British Library, London, Or.11612.

ff.20; 4.5 × 24cm; palmyra leaves; Oriya script, 11 lines between margins with incised decorations; most folios with incised illustrations; covers lacking.

Bibliography: Losty 1980 (most folios reproduced).

117 The 'Rāsakṛīḍa' from the 'Bhāgavata Purāṇa'

The tenth canto of this *Purāṇa* dedicated to Krishna/Vishnu (see No.36) was the one most frequently copied, both in Sanskrit and in its vernacular translations, and from it the episode of the *Rāsakṛīḍa*, the Play of Love, is the most famous. In it the Lord Krishna satisfies the desires of the *gopīs* (cowgirls) of Brindaban in a mystical, communal union, which later commentators regarded as a symbol of the soul's longing for, and eventual union with, God.

In Orissa this text and others in Sanskrit or Oriya which stress the erotic nature of the encounter between Krishna and the *gopīs* were particularly popular. This Ms. of the *Rāsakṛīḍa* section is probably of early 18th-century date, and is in the mainstream of Orissa illustration at this time, with immensely ponderous limbs and sharply pointed features, although despite the heaviness of the style the effect is still of considerable gracefulness. The sparing use of colour on some of



118 f.23. The vision of Akrūra, who sees Krishna and Balarāma in their divine forms in the waters of the Jumna, worshipped by the gods.



119 f.67b. The *gopīs* in the forest.

the folios creates a most charming effect, as in the episode where the *gopīs* ask the trees of the forest where Krishna has disappeared to (ff.12b, 13a), each of the trees named in the text being carefully differentiated. It was probably intended originally to be decorated throughout with colour. There are several unfinished folios in which the outline only is drawn, which may be compared with their finished counterparts.

British Library, London, Or.11689.

ff.27; 4.5 × 37cm; palmyra leaves; Sanskrit in Oriya script; various lines per side (up to 16), text in centre with commentary of Shṛīdhara above and below, between margins with geometric and arabesque decoration; most folios with incised drawings, three with colour; plain bevelled wooden covers.

Bibliography: Losty 1980 (most folios reproduced, four in colour). Barrett and Gray 1963, pp.74–5 (f.1b illustrated in colour).

118 The 'Akrūra Upākhyāna' from the 'Bhāgavata Purāṇa'

The tenth canto of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* after describing the *Rāsakṛīḍa* (No.117) deals with the wicked plots of Lord Krishna's uncle Kamsa to entice Him to Mathura to kill Him. He sends the good Akrūra to persuade Krishna to come to Mathura to fight his champion wrestler, which Krishna laughingly agrees to do. On the way back to Mathura they stop at the river Jumna and Krishna allows Akrūra a vision of Himself and His brother Balarāma in Their divine forms respectively as the four-armed Vishnu, Divine Preserver of the Universe, and the cosmic serpent, the 1,000-hooded, 1,000-headed Ananta.

This 18th-century manuscript from Orissa is in a rather unusual style—the draughtsmanship is superior to that of the *Rāsakṛīḍa* (No.117) and is indeed probably somewhat earlier, as it lacks the fussiness of excessive detail displayed by that manuscript. It is, however, in a tradition of even greater angularity and distortion of the human figure compared with other Orissan styles, with narrow waist and immensely wide shoulders and

breasts and a human profile which displays a sharpened nose and chin and receding forehead. The ladies wear their hair in a great bun at the back of the neck, which may indicate a survival in Orissa of elements of the Vijayanagar and Deccani styles, so perhaps an origin in the southern portion of Orissa might be indicated for this style, although the angularity seems also related to the Vishnupur style of Bengal. The Ms. is much damaged but displays a singular elegance and charm in its drawing, rising at the end to a not unworthy representation, despite its tiny scale, of the cosmic vision experienced by Akrūra in the waters of the Jumna.

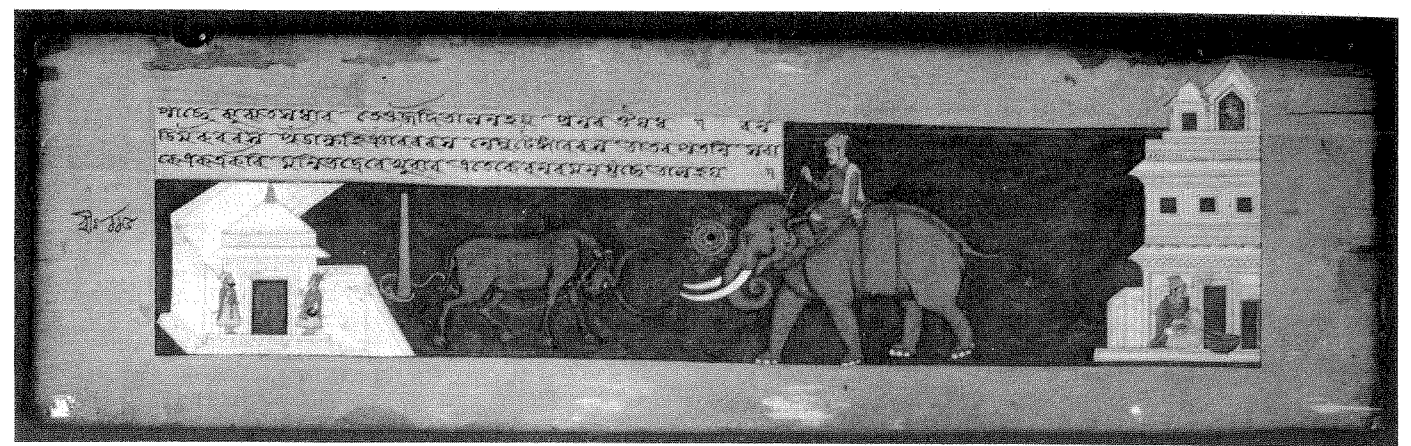
British Library, London, Or.13719.

ff.28; 4 × 22.5cm; palmyra leaves; 3–8 lines between margins with geometric and arabesque decorations; most folios with incised drawings; bevelled wooden boards, with floral designs in interiors and traces of paint on exteriors.

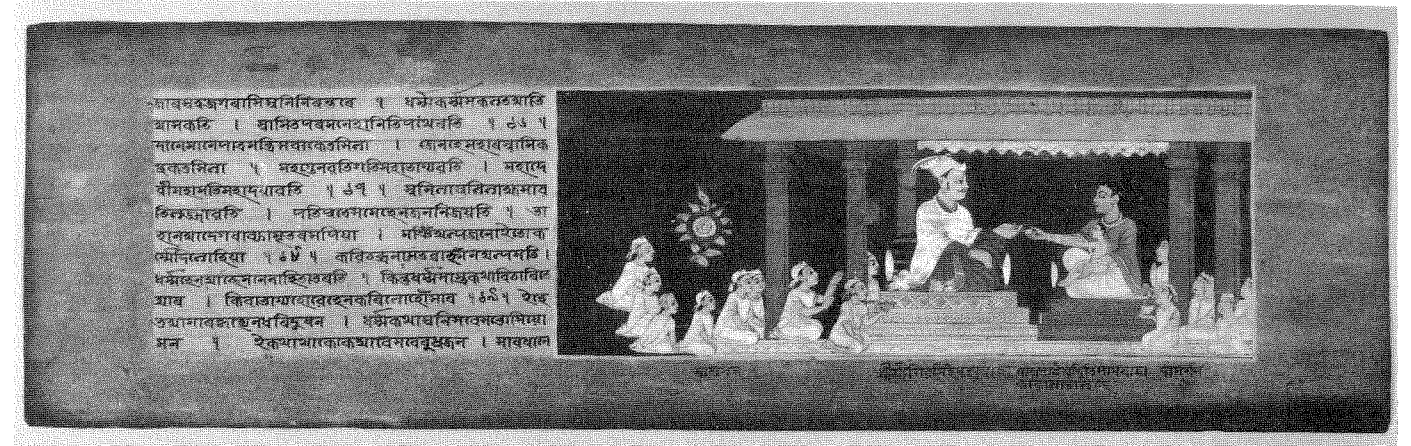
Bibliography: Losty 1980.

119 'Kīrtanaghoṣā'

A cycle of poems in Assamese in praise of Krishna by Shankaradeva (c.1449–1558),



120 f.115. The young elephant is to be made fearless by matching it against buffalos. By Dilbar and Dosāi.



121 f.3b. King Sib Singh and his Queen, Ambikā, with their son the Tipam Rāja. By Badha Ligorā.

which is one of the classics of Assamese literature by one of its greatest poets and religious mystics.

The Ms. has suffered some deprecations and now consists of 179 double-leaves of paper (originally there were 204) of the *tulāpāt* variety, each leaf being folded in two lengthwise and lightly stitched along the fold. Chain and wire marks are very prominent. Only the recto of each half-sheet was utilized for the text. There are 351 paintings in all in the popular style of Assamese painting, i.e. that practised from at least the 17th-century in the Vaishnava *sattras* or monasteries in Assam. Its style is very close to the *Bhāgavata* Ms. in the Bali Sattra Nowgong which bears the doubtful date of 1539¹. Doubtless both manuscripts were produced in such a *sattra* about 1650.

British Library, London, Or.13086.

ff.179; 17 × 40cm; *tulāpāt* paper; 16 lines Assamese text, 13 × 32cm; important passages (*Gajendramokṣa*, *Rāsakṛīḍa*, etc.) with coloured margins; 351 paintings, usually underneath some of the lines of text; foliation on verso left margin preceded by *śrī*; plain wooden boards 18 × 48cm; no stringholes.

Bibliography: Marrison 1969.

¹Datta Barua 1949.

120 'Hastividyārṇava'

The Ocean of Knowledge on Elephants, a treatise in Assamese on everything to do with elephants—their varieties, functions, modes of keeping and training them, their illnesses and remedies, etc. It was written by Sukumār Barkāth for the Ahom King Sib Singh and his queen Ambikā in 1656/1734. Goswami states that it was written for the benefit of the *Hati Barua*, the Keeper of the Royal Elephants, but nothing is known of the author.

The manuscript was written in a large and elegant Assamese hand on 193 folios of *sāñci* bark, coloured yellow, of which 135 still survive. Most of the leaves are illustrated with gaily painted pictures of elephants in their numerous varieties and functions, with their keepers and other attendants. Numerous pictures show the royal function of elephants, with King Sib Singh riding one, or watching from his palace windows with his queen beside him. The colophon implies that the author also wrote out this work, and gives the name of the two artists responsible, Dilbar and Dosāi, who depict themselves

receiving the manuscript from the author for illustration. Their names do not re-occur on any other manuscript.

The *Hastividyārṇava* is perhaps the loveliest of the group of manuscripts in the Ahom court style associated with Sib Singh and his queens, and is decidedly livelier than the others of the group. The two artists hardly stray beyond the normal limitations of the style—monochrome grounds, horizontal viewpoint—but their realistic subject-matter enables them to give us glimpses of daily life in 18th-century Assam.

Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Gauhati.

Provenance: Collection of Mohidhar Burhagohain, grandson of Purnananda Burhagohain (see No.122).

ff.135 (out of 193); 17 × 66cm; *sāñci* bark, coloured yellow; ten lines of Assamese script; central stringhole, with floral decorations around it; 95 folios with illustrations.

Bibliography: DCAM 1930, pp.65–7. Choudhury 1976 (facsimile edition).

121 'Dharma Purāṇa'

The 'Book of Right Conduct' an Assamese Vaishnava metrical text of Hindu doctrine and religious practice by Kavichandra Dvija, the court poet of King Sib Singh (1714-44) composed in 1736 at the command of the king and his queen Ambikā. This is the royal presentation manuscript, written on 174 leaves of *sāncipāt*, coloured pink.

King Sib Singh (or Sivasimha) and his second queen Phuleshvarī who died in 1731 being Shaiva-Shākta Hindus were persecutors of the Vaishnavas. However, the king married his late queen's cousin who was a Vaishnava, and this lady, Ambikā Devī, softened the king's attitude. This manuscript marks the reconciliation between the court and the Vaishnavas, for the opening paintings show the king accepting the royal copy of this work. These scenes are the most interesting in the whole volume, for there are also portraits of Queen Ambikā with her young son, the Tipam Rāja, while the work ends with the King and Queen being carried in state in their royal palanquins. These Assamese royal portraits are unique in India, for there was no purdah in Assam, and Ambikā's portrait must be based on her real appearance. Other portraits of her for example in the *Hastividyaṛṇava* (No.120) merely show her looking out of a window, but here are two full-length portraits of her. She was a highly cultivated lady who patronized men of letters and artists, constructed public works, and wielded real power in the kingdom. Her description as *Rāja-pateśvarī* in the labels which accompany all the pictures, or Mistress of the King's Diadem, has misled Barnett into thinking this to be a portrait of the Goddess of Sovereignty, whereas it actually refers to Ambikā as Queen-regnant, which she, like Phuleshvarī, was. Sib Singh was so under the influence of astrologers, who predicted in 1722 that his reign would shortly come to an end, that he declared first Phuleshvarī and then in 1731, Ambikā, to be the Bara Rāja or Chief King. The royal portraits are on the second and third folios and the last, showing them with their young son the Tipam Rāja, who is on one occasion dressed in full Mughal costume.

On the last folio the royal pair are carried in separate palanquins in a procession led by elephants, both of them with royal umbrellas and large circular chowries designating their equal royal status, and on the reverse the royal couple and their child seated in state are shown receiving the completed Ms. which is on a pedestal table showing the original painted sides and with a cord wrapped around it. The presenter of the Ms. is named as one Badha who in the colophon is called the beautifier of the manuscript; under his

full name, Badha Ligorā, he is known as the painter of the *Saṅkhaśūḍavadhā* and *Bhāgavata* Book VI.¹ He must be the senior artist responsible for the overall plan of the Ms. and the five royal portraits, while other junior artists did the rest of the work. The majority of the paintings are on a lower artistic level than the royal portraits, although they yield many charming and most interesting studies of daily life and ritual in Assam in the 18th century.

British Library, London, Or.11386.

ff.174 (originally 179); 17×58cm; leaves of *sāncipāt*; 12 lines of Assamese in panels 11×47cm; the text and paintings have been applied straight on to the bark without a ground, while the margins have been heavily sprinkled with pinkish-red pigment; remains of *pāśvacitra* on sides; foliation is on the verso left margins, each number preceded by *śrī*; approx. 350 paintings in all; covers of rough *sāncipāt*, the lower one with a large drawing of an elephant; central stringholes throughout with floral ornamentation.

Bibliography: Barnett 1933.

¹Das Gupta 1972, p.14.

122 'Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa'

COLOUR PLATE XXXVIII

The *Brahmakhaṇḍa*, the Book of Creation, the first of the four books comprising this least studied of *Purāṇas* in an Assamese translation by Durgāchārya, grandson of Āgamāchārya. The *Brahmavaivarta* is a late medieval document, in which whatever early material it might have contained was thoroughly reworked by the followers of the Vaishnava sect of Nimbārka, which makes Krishna the Supreme Brahman and Rādhā his eternal consort during the periods of creation, when both sport with the *gopīs* and *gopas* in Goloka, the Cow-world, a divine Brindaban high above the heavens of the other gods.

The *Purāṇa* was especially popular in Assam and was translated at least four times into Assamese, the first time by the great poet Kavichandra Chakravartī for Ratnakānti, first wife of King Sib Singh. This translation by Durgāchārya is apparently unknown outside this Ms., nor is anything known of the author. His grandfather Āgamāchārya flourished during the reign of Rājeshvara Singh (1751-69). This Ms. is dated Saka 1758/1836, and was copied by Jādurāma Chāṅgakākātī (*Kākātī* being a professional scribe at the Ahom court). The approximately 400 paintings are by Durgārāma Betha. The first eight folios of the Ms. are occupied with a royal genealogy, with pictures of the personages named, which traces the descent of the Ahom King Purandara Singh from Rudra Singh (r.1696-1714). Purandara Singh

was the unhappy victim of the collapse of Ahom authority at the end of the 18th century, in the civil anarchy which raged in Assam. This precipitated a Burmese occupation of the Brahmaputra valley (1816) and a subsequent invasion by the forces of the East India Company in the resultant Anglo-Burmese war of 1824-6. He came to the throne at about the age of ten in 1818; he was married to the daughter of the powerful Pūrnananda the Burha Gohain or chief minister, who was largely responsible for upholding Ahom rule during the reign of his predecessors, but died in 1816. Purandara was ousted almost at once from the throne by the adherents of the Burmese party. It was not until 1832 that he was restored to any part of his ancestral dominions, when the British returned Upper Assam (the Sibsagar and Lakhimpur Districts) to him and Jorhat was made his capital, but he was deposed in 1838, allegedly on grounds of misrule.

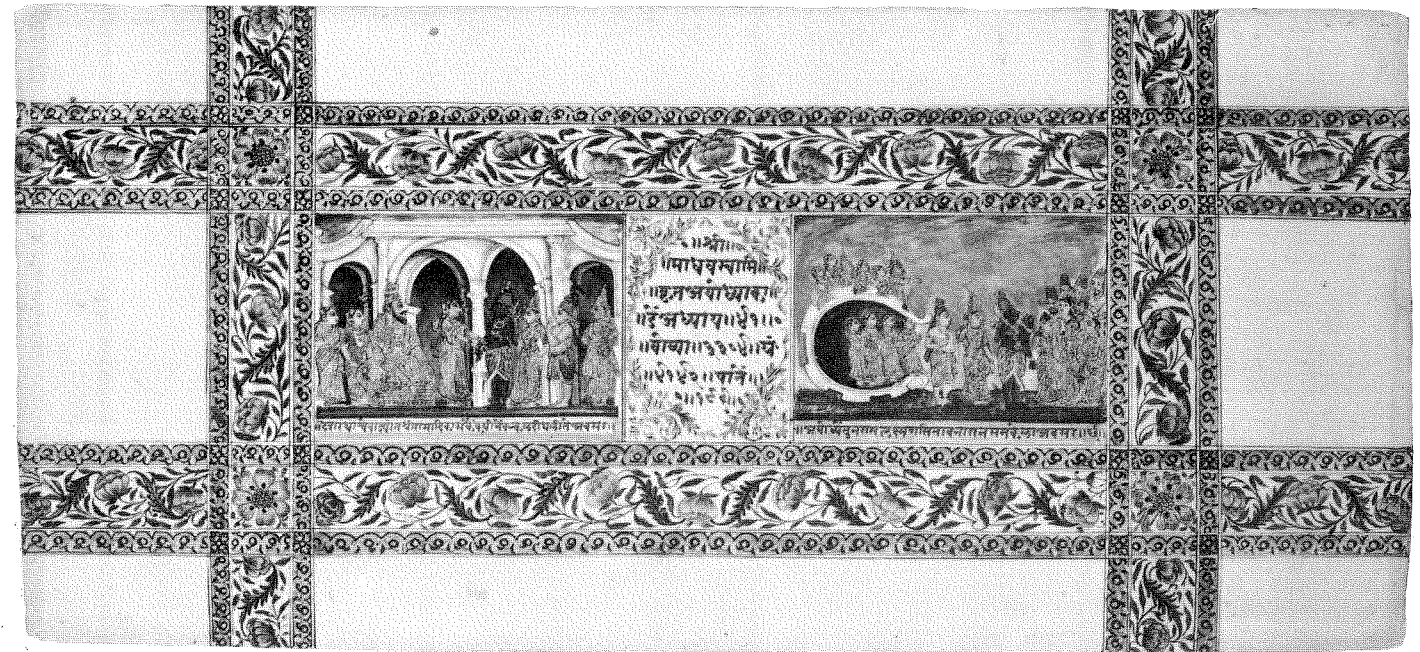
This Ms. of the *Brahmakhaṇḍa* was commissioned by Purandara Singh and his wife, the daughter of the former Chief Minister the Burha Gohain, here called *Rājamantrī*. She is accorded extra special praise in the panegyric, being likened to the goddesses Sarasvatī, Lakshmi and Gaurī. An oddity is that the original name of the lady who is described as the daughter of Pūrnananda the Burha Gohain has been completely erased, and a new name, Kamalā, written over the erasure. This lady might be Kamalapriyā, the wife of Purandara Singh's grandson Kandarpeshvar Singh.

The Ms. represents the last great flowering of Assamese manuscript illustration, and is laid out on the grandest scale. The paintings by Durgārāma Betha vary the illustration of the text with scenes of contemporary life in Assam, with paintings of king and queen in procession or out hunting, as well as with a most valuable series of portraits showing Purandara Singh's descent from Rudra Singh (1696-1714), who is depicted on f.4a; his third son Rājeshvara Singh (1751-69) is on f.4b; his son Sarujana Gohain (f.4b); his son Nirbhaya Singh (f.5a); and his son Brajnātha Singh (f.5b), whom Pūrnananda the Burha Gohain invited to be king in 1818 to overthrow Candrakānta Singh and the Burmese party. Brajnāth was however ineligible to sit on the throne owing to having been mutilated, and his young son Purandara Singh was made king, and is pictured on f.6a with his wife. They are shown again in the next three paintings, while on f.8a are shown portraits of Pūrnananda the Burha Gohain and his son Rucinātha who succeeded to his position.

The manuscript consists of 210 large leaves of *sāncipāt*, with yellow arsenic applied to act as ground and insecticide. The text is written in a large and beautiful



123 Outer cover. Rāma and attendants with mythical birds.



124 f.112b. King Dasharatha with Rāma and Sītā (left) and their departure from Ayodhyā.

hand by Jādurāma Chāṅgakākātī in only 12 lines per page, where, unusually, faint ruled lines were first drawn. Most folios have illustrations on both sides of the leaf, varying in size between small panels and the full width of the script. Where text meets painting the border is staggered, giving a stepped appearance to many of the paintings.

The residence of King Purandara was in Jorhat, but the Ms. appears to have been made in Debgaon (Devagrama in the colophon), which is on the border between Purandara's kingdom of Upper Assam and the British district of Nowgong.

British Library, London, Or.11387.

ff.210; 24.5×64.5cm; *sāncipāt* leaves; 12 lines of Assamese script in panels 13.5×49.5cm; about 400 paintings of varying sizes with the last few folios not being finished; strengthened bark covers.

Bibliography: Barnett 1933. Losty 1980, p.25 (col. repro. of ff.3a and 142b).

123 Manuscript cover

A wooden cover inlaid with designs in ivory depicting Rāma enthroned with attendants in the centre, and a large fabulous bird on each side, apparently based on the simurgh, surrounded by *mārvārī* leaves. The work is of the 17th

century, probably from the Andhra country in southern India.

British Museum, London, 1971, 3-2, 2.

124 'Rāmāyaṇa'

A translation of Vālmīki's Sanskrit epic (see Nos.91-7) into Marathi *ovī* metre, made by Mādhavasvāmi in 1693 under the patronage of the Maratha Rāja Sahājī II of Tanjore (1684-1711). The translator was a Vaishnava *bhakta*, the grandson of Eknāth of Pandharpur, who founded a *math* at Tiruvendur in the Tanjore district. Mādhava also translated the *Mahābhārata*, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, and *Yogavāsīṣṭha* into Marathi.

Sarabhojī, the Rāja of Tanjore (1797-1833), had many copies made of the *Aśvasāstra* and *Gajāsāstra* manuscripts with his own Marathi translations from the Sanskrit, which continue the vertical and bound format of their predecessors. More usual however was a loose-leaf *pothī* format for illustrated manuscripts, with the text contained within a frame, and the decorated margins crossing over one another.¹ This *Rāmāyaṇa* is such a manuscript, each of the 220 *prasaṅgas* or chapters into which the text is divided having these frames round its opening, decorated with arabesques or fruits or flowers displaying considerable European influence. Also at the beginning of the individual *Kāṇḍas* is a pair of paintings within these

frames, showing the elaborately gilded but dead style to which Tanjore painting had been reduced by the middle of the 19th century, the date of this manuscript. British Library, London, Or.13535.

ff.1,050; 16×35cm; European paper, watermarked between 1845 and 1855; 11 lines of *Nāgarī* script with red *daṇḍas*, colophons, etc., between margins ruled in red in two double lines, 26cm apart; opening pages of chapters with marginal decorations; 14 paintings, about 5×8cm; unbound originally, now bound up in separate volumes.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

¹Appasamy 1980.

125 'Shāhnāma'

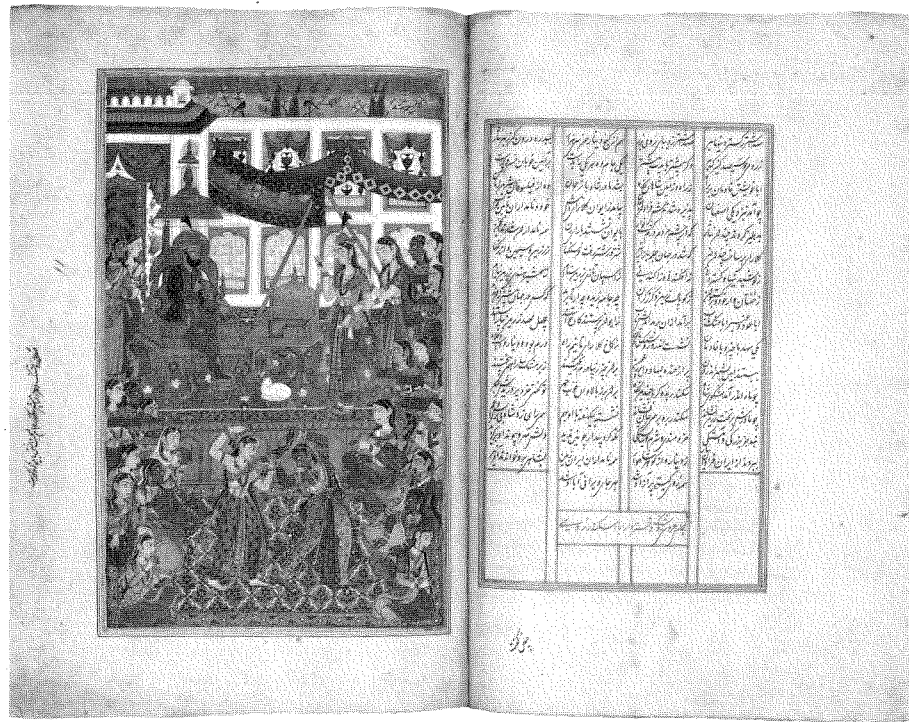
The Book of Kings, by Firdausī (see No.22).

The Ms. is of the second half of the *Shāhnāma* from the accession of Lahrasp, and was copied by Kalī Allāh called *Haft-kalamī* (seven-penned) at Rājūr in 1131/1719. There are 97 miniatures, many of them whole page, in a most interesting provincial style that has hitherto not been possible to pinpoint. The three colophons are most difficult to decipher, but yield the information that the Ms. was copied for one Mahant Ajagat Singh Jiv, the Vizier during the reign of Rāja Azmat

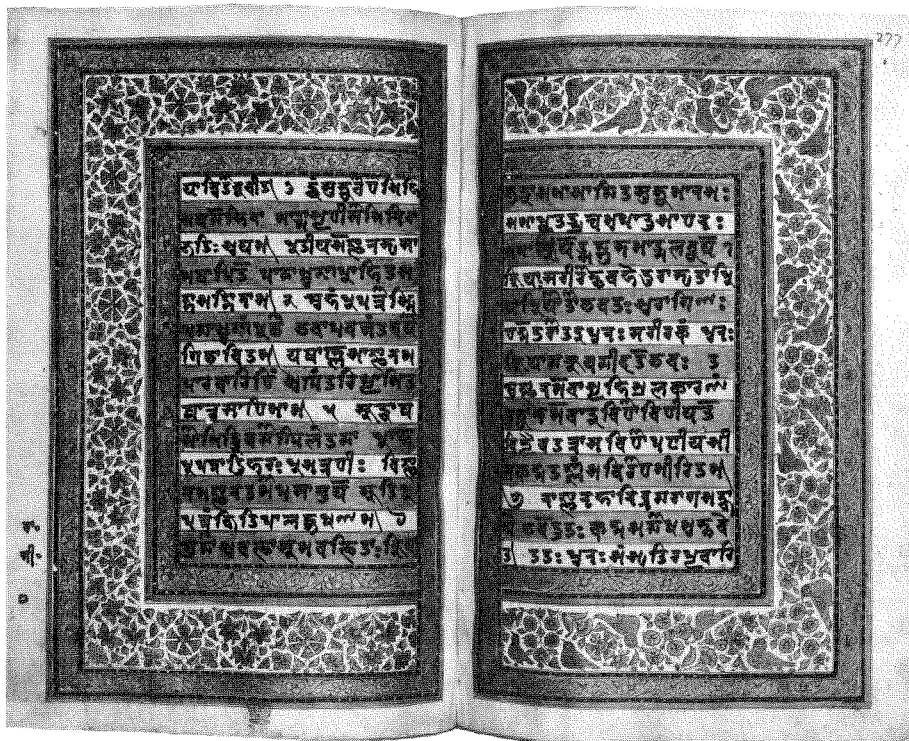
Allāh Khān. The date is corroborated by the mention in the first colophon of Emperor Farrukhsiyar as reigning in Delhi (1713–19) and in the last of Emperor Rafi' ad-Darajat, who reigned for a few months in 1719.

There are many places named Rājūr in India, most of them in the northern Deccan. However the place that seems most suitable as a provenance is Rajauri also called Rampur, now in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which is on the road to Srinagar from Sialkot via the Pir Panjal pass. Its early history is obscure, although often mentioned in the Kashmiri chronicle, the *Rājatarānginī*; its rulers apparently became Muslims about 1500, but interestingly kept the Hindu title of Rāja. Akbar and Jahāngīr always used this route up to Kashmir and stayed at Rajauri. A passage in Jahāngīr's Memoirs, in which he calls the place Rajaur, refers to the rulers' title of Rāja and how Hindu and Muslim customs had become mixed there. The ruler in 1719 was Rāja Azmat Allāh Khān, who reigned from 1703 to 1760, according to the royal records¹. Only three years old at his accession, the throne was seized by his uncle Rafi' Allāh Khān and the boy fled to Delhi, to the Rajauri princess Rahmat un-Nisa, one of the wives of Aurangzīb, and mother of Mu'azam Shāh, the future Emperor Bahādur Shāh (r.1707–12). When somewhat older, the boy returned to Rajaur and apparently reigned until about 1760. These Rajauri records are inaccurate (the Rajauri princess was probably dead by 1691), but the main outline seems correct. Corroborating evidence that the Rajaur of the Ms.'s colophon is this little state in Kashmir is furnished by another Ms. of a *Shāhnāma* imitation dated 1090/1679, now in a private collection in London, done at Rājūr in the reign of Rājā Inayat Allāh Khān with paintings in the same style as the 1719 manuscript. In the Rajauri family records, Rāja Azmat Allāh Khān's grandfather was Rāja Inayat Allāh Khān who reigned c.1648 to 1676. The paintings of this Ms. must have been added c.1720, as they are in precisely the same style as the 1719 *Shāhnāma*.

This style is one of great richness achieved by lavish use of gold and silver and good-quality pigments; the paintings are by an artist of originality, without many models to follow for his compositions. The style on occasion has a Deccani feel about it—female costumes, occasional Deccani turbans, favourite Deccani colour combinations of greens and purples, blues and pinks, the sky painted in bands of gold and blue, occasional composition in layers—but it is noteworthy that many of these are also in Kashmiri painting. The artist has made a conscious attempt to indicate the Iranian origin of the text, to judge from the



125 f.103b. Alexander and Roshanak, daughter of Darius.



126 f.277. Illuminated border (hashiya) round the *Bhagavadgītā*.

frequent appearance of Iranian turbans; male costume is invariably the Iranian *peshvaz*, although in other respects it resembles 17th-century Indian costume, i.e. the gown is three-quarter length and tied at the waist by a cummerbund with

short *patkā*.

Landscape is normally a flat green, olive or brown ground dotted with regularly disposed tufts of grass, and ending in a hilly high horizon from which protrude trees or buildings or people. Rocks are

frequently depicted in vivid shades of blue and purple, brown and orange, but rarely terminating the landscape or protruding above the horizon. Water is silver or silver-green in old-fashioned basket-pattern and whorls. The architectural details seem basically mid-17th century—there is an occasional Bengali roof and pillars of the Jahāngīri type. Much of his idiom conforms to the Popular Mughal tradition, while some of it goes back through the Sultanate tradition to a 15th-century Persian origin. In one painting a Chinese scroll-cloud drifts across the landscape. In many instances, the powerful Indian instinct for spatial organization according to higher criteria than mere naturalism has combined with the more fantastic elements in the *Shāhnāma* story to produce paintings of the greatest originality as in the scene of Iskandar and Israfil talking to the birds (f.125a), while there are some scenes of great loveliness, as in the traditionally Indian court scene of f.104a, Alexander with Darius's daughter.

British Library, London, Add.18804.

ff.358; 36 × 24cm; highly polished paper; four columns of *Nasta'liq* script, in panels 23 × 14cm, with margins ruled in gold and colours; two *sarlawhs*; 97 paintings from full-page to horizontal strip in size; original leather binding with flap, with central sunk medallions and pendants, and frame of cartouches etc., and doublures of blue leather painted with gold rosettes.

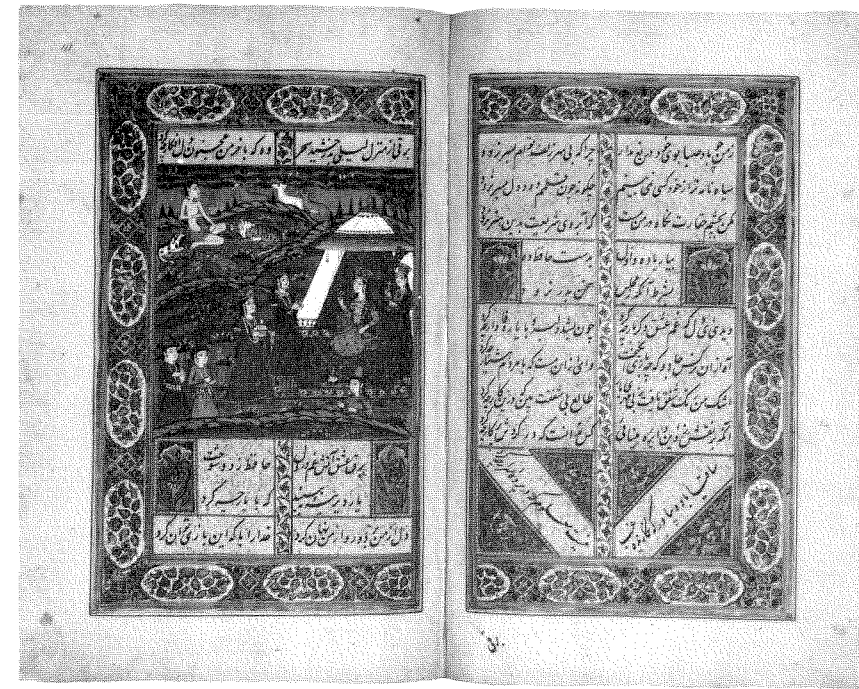
Bibliography: BM 1876, p.538. BL 1977, pp.46–7.

¹Hutchison and Vogel 1925.

126 Collection of Sanskrit Devotional Texts

A collection of Hindu texts, the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Devīmāhātmya*, and many other ritual and devotional texts. There are several hands involved in the writing of the texts, the script being the *Śāradā* hand of Kashmir, probably of the mid-18th century. The Ms. is important however for its illuminations, which were only partly completed, but which represent an attempted synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim manuscript traditions.

There are 27 miniatures in the Kashmiri style by two different hands, one of which, the finer, seems closely derived from the hand of the painter of the *Asvamedhaparvan* of 1694; he attempts ambitious landscapes with varied buildings, with spandrels occupying the top corners of his pictures, while his male lay-figures wear Popular Mughal dress of the 17th century, and his Brahmans cover their hair with bag-like headgear, all features seen in the 1694 Ms. Elaborate floral frames surround his paintings, of the type



127 f.111. Laylā in her tent and Majnūn with the wild beasts.

seen in the *Pañcaratna* from Jaipur of 1772 (No.129), but which appear to be of earlier date in Kashmir. The other hand seems derived from the first one, still keeping the spandrels, for example, but in a somewhat simplified and later style with less elaborate borders. There are also two 'carpet pages' of illumination, one apparently of the *Pārijāta* or wish-fulfilling Tree of Heaven of Hindu mythology, all in gold and colours, the other of the famous Kashmiri whorl, the origin of the Paisley pattern. All of these pages have been introduced into the manuscript, as none has text on the reverse, and are on slightly different papers, differing actually among themselves.

In addition to the miniatures, there are 28 pages (ff.276a–285b, ff.583a–586b) in which appear marginal illuminations of flowers and animals and birds in elaborate arabesques in two tones of gold in the Mughal fashion, around the Sanskrit text, which is here written on alternate bands of gold-covered, and gold-sprinkled white, paper, while many other pages were prepared for illumination in this fashion but were never completed.

The Ms. appears to have been in course of production over a period of time. The marginal illumination is intimately connected with one of the paintings of the earlier artist, so that these may all be assigned to the first period of the manuscript's production about 1725–50. It was left incomplete, judging from the prepared but not illuminated state of some of the pages, and also had not enough paintings in it—the *Bhagavadgītā* contains only two paintings by the earlier artist, the

chariot of Arjuna and Krishna between the armies, and the Fish avatar of Vishnu. At about 1775 the other paintings were added, including repeats of the same two *Bhagavadgītā* pages. The Paisley whorl on f.340a was probably added even later.

British Library, London, Or.11835.

Provenance: Bequeathed by P.C. Manuk and Miss G. M. Coles through the National Art-Collections Fund, 1948.

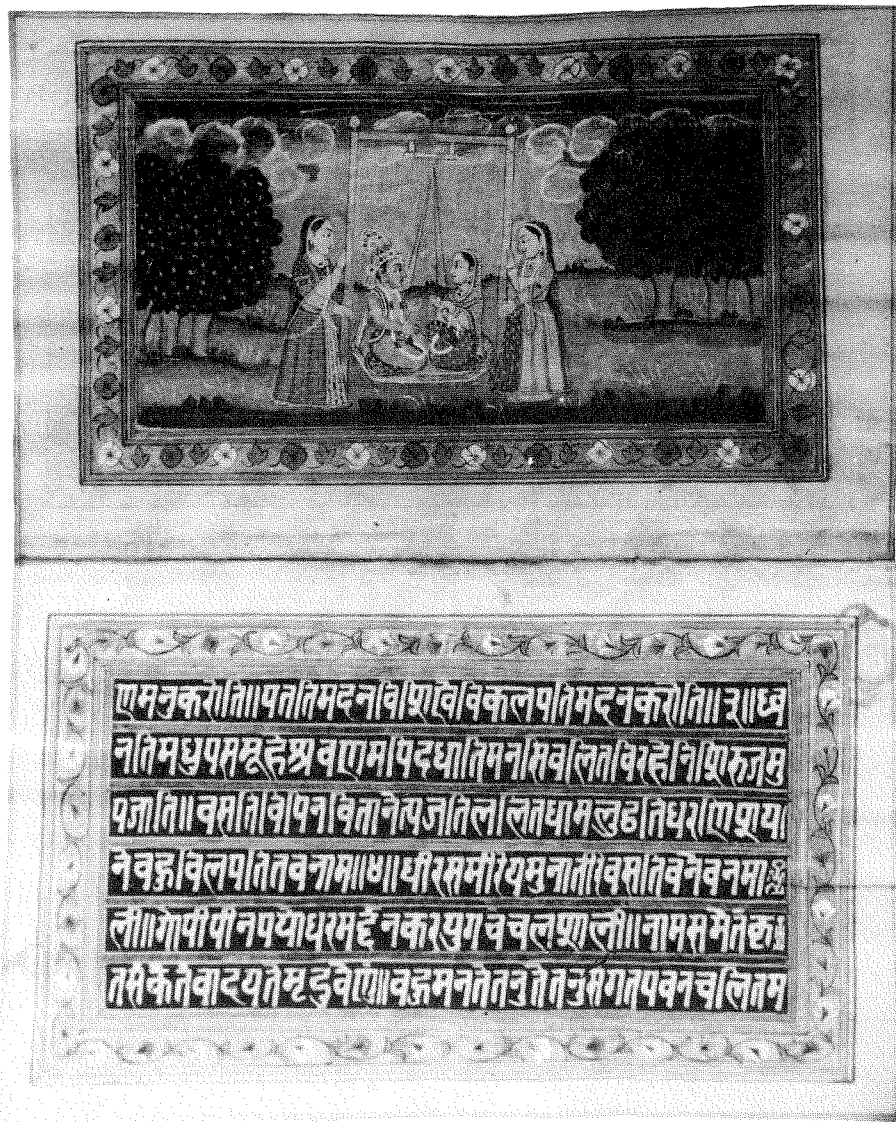
ff.608 (602–608 being flyleaves with notes); 20.5 × 14cm; thin, burnished paper; 14 lines of *Śāradā* script in panels 13 × 8cm with margins ruled in gold and colours; 14 folios with decorated gold margins; 29 full pages of illumination and miniatures; modern binding.

Bibliography: Unpublished.

127 'Divān' of Hāfiz

The collected poems of the Persian poet Hāfiz (see No.73).

Fine-quality Persian manuscripts from Kashmir in the 18th century exhibit some of the richest illuminations ever attempted in India. In addition to the normal *sarlawh* and *unwāns*, every page may have a fully illuminated border of floral decoration, and scattered throughout the text can be little illuminated rectangles and triangles, quite apart from the numerous miniatures themselves. The paper is of the thinnest, finest quality, burnished and gold-sprinkled, a speciality of Kashmir, for it is found nowhere else at this time, while the covers are often painted and lacquered, or finely patterned in leather. Kashmir was famous for its paper through-



128 ff. 17b, 18. *Hindola rāga*, the melody of this section of the *Gītāgovinda*.

out the east at this time.¹ All these qualities are displayed by this copy of the *Divān* of Hāfiz, a superbly glittery manuscript which exhibits Kashmiri illumination at its best. Of course as a work of art it is not up to the highest standards, seeking to compensate for the lack of high quality miniatures by over-indulgence in other forms of illumination. Every page has a wide border around the text of flowers and stylized leaves in a star pattern in gold and colours. Occasionally these are varied to include cartouches with different floral arrangements. More flowers in rectangular or triangular panels are sprinkled throughout the text. The 112 miniatures are fairly elaborate compositions without the deadness and uniformity which affects Kashmiri work in the next century. The *unwān* (ff. 13b–14a) has the broad gold and blue bands typical of Kashmiri illumination in the border around the normal arrangement of panels around the opening of the text and displays a characteristic

Kashmiri element—the two side *ansas* are echoed by ones at top and bottom in the middle, split between the two pages. A final gold bookplate is in the shape of the Kashmir tree of life seen in No. 126, with a date of 1211/1796–7 at its base, and the name Yūsuf, without any other information. This would seem to be the date of the Ms., and the name of the illuminator, who was perhaps also the artist. A very similar Ms. of Hāfiz in the State Public Library, Leningrad, bears this same date of 1211/1796–7.²

British Library, London, Add. 7763.

Provenance: Collection of Claudius James Rich, acquired in India before 1808; purchased in 1825.

ff. 404; 22 × 14 cm; thin, highly polished paper; 12 lines of good *Nasta'liq* in two columns on gold-sprinkled panels 13.5 × 8 cm; panels of floral illumination throughout text; text panels with gold and green ruled margins with border one cm wide of

floral illumination with outer ruled margins of gold and colours; one *unwān*; two *sarlavh*; one gold bookplate; 112 miniatures, occupying about one-third of the text panels; covers with central panel stamped and gilded and red leather margins painted in gold with stamped and gilded cartouches; red doublures painted in gold; rebound in Europe with new spine.

Bibliography: BM 1879, p. 630. BL 1977, pp. 56–8.

¹Forster 1798, vol. II, p. 19.

²Adamova and Greck 1976, p. 73, with colour repros.

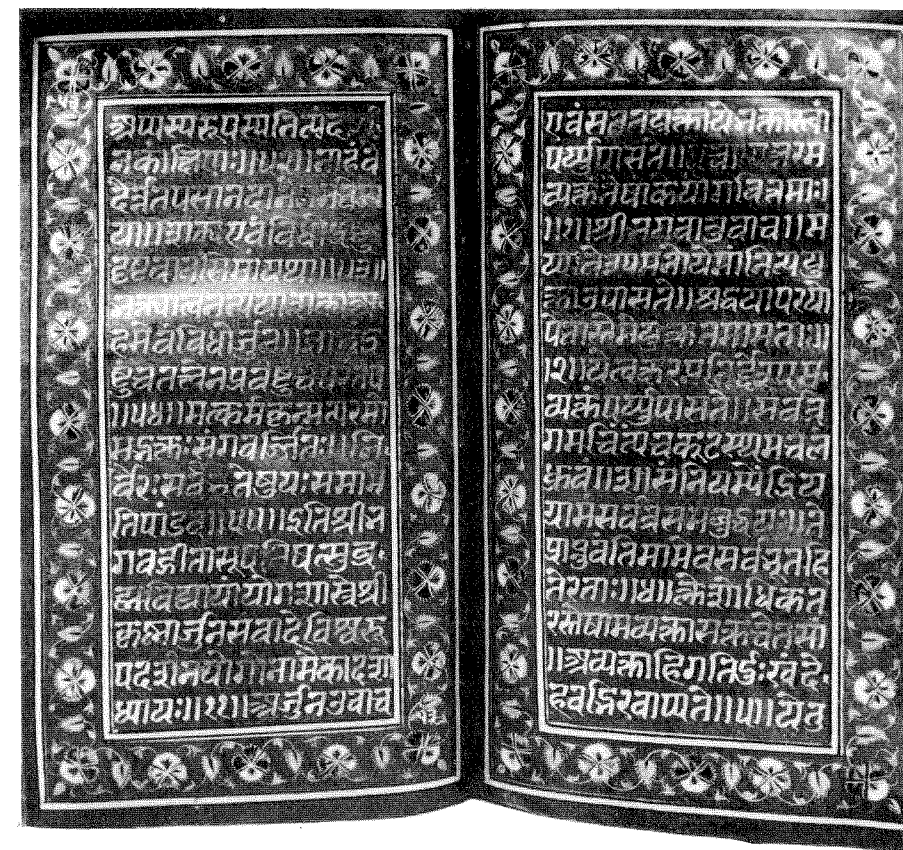
128 'Gītāgovinda'

The Song of the Cowherd, by Jayadeva (see No. 37).

The text was copied in 1850/1794 by the scribe Mahtāb Rāya in Kashmir, in white *Nāgarī* on a black ground, with borders of gold illumination with simple floral arabesques. Like several other such manuscripts in the Jaipur royal library, after acquisition (in this case through Mārphat Rāya Ratnalāl, Minister of Mahārāja Pratap Singh in 1852/1796) it was embellished with miniatures, 21 folios being inserted with paintings on the versos, and bound up. The miniatures' subjects include the *rāgas* to which the *Gītāgovinda* is sung. Mahtāb Rāya was a well-known scribe in the later 18th century who also was employed by William Jones and Charles Wilkins in Calcutta, where he copied several manuscripts for each of these scholars, now mostly in the Bodleian and India Office Libraries respectively. He was more than a simple copyist, as many of the Wilkins' Mss. involve rearrangements of the text at the latter's request. His clear and elegant style is typical of the Kashmiri scribes' work at this period, although paradoxically he does not appear to have been a Kashmiri—in one of the Wilkins Mss.¹ he says he comes from the south (*daṣṣinadeśa*). Some of his Calcutta work is dated to between 1787 and 1790, and he appears to have moved on first to Benares² and then to Kashmir. Other work by him is to be found in the Jaipur royal library, including another *Gītāgovinda* copied in the same year (1794) also in Kashmir, in an extremely large style of *Nāgarī*, and similarly embellished with inserted miniatures.³

Maharaja Man Singh Museum, Jaipur, MS AG 2172.

ff. 33, with 21 extra illustrated leaves; 9.5 × 17 cm; polished white paper; six lines of white *Nāgarī* on black ground (7 × 14.5 cm) within gold margins with polychrome arabesque; 21 miniatures, same size as text panels with gilded borders with floral decorations; binding of boards along long edge covered in *misru* cloth, i.e. white cloth embroidered with



129 f. 54. The *Bhāgavadgītā* illuminated.

four lines of red stylized flowers; with flap (*jihvā*) with scalloped edge.

Bibliography: Jaipur 1971, pp. 51–2.

¹fol., Skt. MS. 2816.

²fol., Skt. MS. 2803.

³Jaipur 1971.

129 'Pañcaratna'

The Five Jewels from the *Mahābhārata*. This group of five Sanskrit texts is of the *Bhāgavadgītā*, and four lesser hymns and didactic passages from the epic. They were often copied in the late 18th century.

The *gūṭka* format, a Hindu Ms. in upright format and bound, was brought to perfection in the late 18th century, above all in the Jaipur royal library. For the first time manuscripts of Hindu texts were being produced which vied with contemporary Muslim manuscripts in the perfection of their paper, calligraphy, illumination and binding. Typical is this elegant Ms. of the *Pañcaratna* from the Jaipur collection dated 1828/1772, copied in an extremely fine *Nāgarī* in gold ink by the scribe Ghāsi Mahātmā for Mahārāja Prithvi Singh of Jaipur (1767–78). All the folios are of dark-blue paper, against which the gold of the ink glows satisfyingly. Around each text panel is a polychrome border, with floral geometric decoration, different in every opening.

Maharaja Man Singh Museum, Jaipur, MS No. 25

ff. 130; 21.25 × 12 cm; dark-blue paper; 17 lines of gold *Nāgarī* in panels 16.5 × 7.5 cm, with wide borders of polychrome floral and geometric designs; covers of *zari* (dark-red velvet) embroidered with silver and blue thread, forming peony flowers in lozenges in central rectangular panels on front and back, with similar flowers in border, and on flap.

Bibliography: Jaipur 1971, pp. 28–9.

130 'Bhāgavata Purāṇa'

Illustrated on p. 121.

The Book of the Lord (see No. 36). During the 18th century, the Hindu sacred texts were frequently copied in minute script and illuminated on long rolls of thin, highly burnished paper, the most frequently occurring being the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, *Bhāgavadgītā* and *Devīmāhātmya*. Some of the earliest appear to be from Kashmir¹ of the early 18th century and it may have been a fashion started in imitation of the long strips of birch-bark which were not infrequently made into rolled manuscripts as amulets. Another possible source is the Middle Eastern tradition of rolled-up copies of the Koran in minute script kept as amulets within cases. Certainly the minuteness of the writing employed points to this source, and also the type of illumination. However, whereas the Koran could be

copied onto a relatively small roll of paper, a text like the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* could require, as in this instance, a roll nearly 20 metres in length.

Very rarely do any of these Mss. boast of a colophon, and those that do are usually out of the normal style, as the copy of the *Adhyātmārāmāyaṇa* in the Bodleian, copied by Ghāṣirāma Kāshmīra in Benares in the early 19th century². More usually the style is similar to this one, a more or less indeterminate style common to much 19th-century work in northern India. From the large number of them presently in the Alwar Museum, the royal studio in Alwar under Vinay Singh (1815–57) seems to have been a centre for their production, and Jaipur also must have been a centre for such work. The lavish illumination and attention to detail of this one betoken a rich patron. A series of eight-lobed cartouches at the beginning first introduce the great gods of Hinduism—the sacred syllable Om, Ganesh, Brahmā, Vishnu and Shiva, and then twelve scenes from the life of Krishna, before the text proper begins. The twelve *skandhas* are separated by twelve (the tenth canto is in two parts) paintings in cartouches containing subjects from the *Purāṇa* itself, and there are 55 smaller paintings in roundels within the text of Krishna, sages, princes, and other personages. Borders illuminated in gold with a floral creeper run the length of the roll on either side of the text, and the spandrels round the cartouches are similarly illuminated. The very opening of the roll before the first picture is the equivalent of a *sarlavh*, a rectangular illumination with a W-shaped top and finials, in which peony arabesques are conspicuous.

The illustrations are in the Hindu equivalent of the Delhi style, with heavily modelled features and luxuriantly coloured landscapes. Two artists are involved, the style of the opening series of 17 paintings being much lighter than the remainder.

British Library, London, Add. 16624.

Provenance: Purchased at Wilks Sale in 1847.

Scroll format; 19.8m × 11–11.5 cm; very thin burnished paper; minute *Nāgarī* script; five lines to the cm, 8 cm wide between broad borders gilded and with floral creepers; opening *skandha* within cartouches of alternating sizes, with polychrome illumination in spandrels; 17 miniatures in eight-lobed cartouches at opening, and another 12 between the *skandhas*; 56 smaller miniatures in roundels scattered throughout text at regular intervals (apart from last two *skandhas*).

Bibliography: BM 1902, p. 34.

¹e.g. the damaged British Library MS. Add. 26419.

²Bodleian MS. Sansk. e. 13.

European Influence on the Manuscript Tradition

Europeans had been visiting India regularly since the 16th century, with the discovery of the sea route round southern Africa. The Portuguese were firmly established in Goa, which was part of Bijapuri territory, and the Sultans of Bijapur valued the trading links this presence afforded them with the outside world. They sent presents to Akbar in Agra, including European paintings and prints, and for many years Jesuits were present at court. European art greatly intrigued Akbar and his son and considerably influenced the development of the Mughal style, as we have seen. Other Europeans came to trade and as ambassadors—Roe, Manucci, Bernier. Some must have collected paintings and manuscripts—the *Laud Rāgamālā* (No. 102) must have been brought back to England by one of these early embassies. Not until later in the century do we have evidence of European patronage of painting—the albums of Emperors and Sultans of which Golconda made a speciality for dealing with Europeans, particularly the Dutch, until well into the 18th century. Although Europeans may have commissioned these albums of portraits, they had no influence on their style which is purely Golconda work.

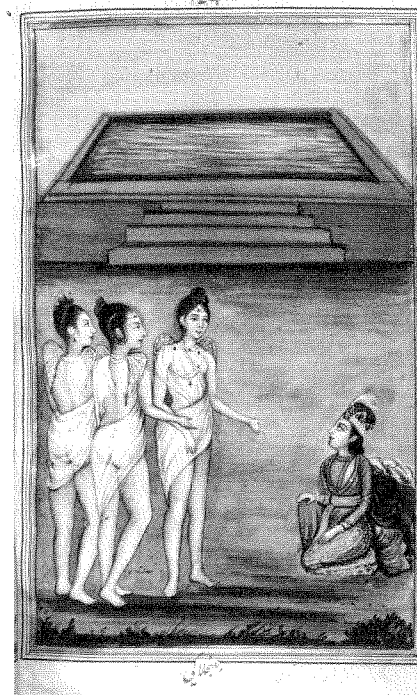
It was not until Europeans established themselves in the political system of India during the process of the dismemberment of the Mughal empire that their patronage had any serious impact on the various Indian styles. The British East India Company was officially established in political control of Bengal from 1765, and had representatives and agents at many of the Indian courts, as well as a full bureaucratic establishment in Calcutta. The French were denied any serious political role in India as a consequence of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 which ended the Seven Years War, but many Frenchmen were still resident in India. Some were content simply to collect. Men like Richard Johnson and Antoine Polier, both of whose Indian careers took them to Hyderabad and Lucknow, the latter especially being a dispersal point for the royal Mughal collections, assembled *muraqqaʿ* in the way Indian collectors did, having their paintings and calligraphic specimens mounted in frames and bound up (No. 131). They both also collected manuscripts, in the various languages used in India (No. 106). One of Polier's great achievements was his commissioning a complete set of manuscripts of the Vedas which he was able to obtain only with the greatest difficulty from scribes in Jaipur with the aid of Mahārāja Pratap Singh, and on his return to Europe in 1789 made haste to deposit them in the British Museum for the benefit of scholarship. His most important *muraqqaʿ*, which is probably the album visible on the table in John Zoffany's portrait of Polier with his friends painted in 1786 or 87, contains notable examples of Mughal, Deccani and Lucknow painting.

Others like Elijah Impey, the Lord Chief Justice of Bengal, and his wife, both collected and commissioned examples of Murshidabad painting (No. 113), but also commissioned artists to draw things that they wanted and in the way they wanted. Despite being in the East, the governing classes in Calcutta lived much as they did in England and wanted paintings of their houses, their horses, their dogs and their wives,

and in a style to which they were accustomed. The Indian artist, who had so radically changed his style to suit Mughal taste in the 16th century, now changed it once more in the 18th to accommodate English sensibilities. For every patron like the Impeys who appreciated his own paintings and persuaded him to essay natural-history drawings, having divined the Indian artist's passion for minute attention to detail and intuitive sympathy with the natural world, there were a hundred who wanted paintings only according to the latest received opinion in London on what constituted correct perspective and the correct manner of rendering the 'picturesque'. The Indian artist, ever eager to please his patron, obliged by churning out in station after station, as British influence spread throughout India, albums of stock themes: the Emperors and princes of India, select views of Calcutta or of Agra and Delhi, above all traders and occupations, the 'native' types, as mementoes for the memsahib when she returned to England. They often have a certain charm, but the monotony of these sets is finally repellent. The style is termed Company, after the East India Company's officials who patronized the artists.

Numerous artists went out from England to India to try their luck among the expatriates and also the Indian princes. John Zoffany was the most distinguished artist who visited India, and the Daniels, Thomas and William, did fine work there. But it was the more run-of-the-mill artists who had the greatest influence in shaping the Indian artist's new style. Tilly Kettle, for example, visited Lucknow in the 1770s and painted portraits of Shujaʿ ad-Daula with his sons, which were imitated by various Lucknow artists and became the standard prototypes for the Nawab's portrait. From this period on, there is a consistent Europeanizing trend in Lucknow painting first found in the work of Mīr Kalān Khān. The Lucknow rulers were gripped by a fervent love of things European in the first half of the 19th century. Tilly Kettle and Zoffany in the 1780s were succeeded by a string of British painters including the Daniels, all of them finding favour at court. Robert Home and George Beechey were successively court painters to all the Nawabs (created Kings by George IV in 1819) from Ghāzi ad-Dīn Haider (1814–27) to Wājid ʿAlī Shāh (1847–56), and the palace of Lucknow was built in European style, hung with European oils and decorated in European taste (No. 133). The Kings held banquets in the European fashion for British visitors, and there are paintings in the India Office Library of different Nawabs entertaining successive Governors-General—Moirā, Bentinck and Hardinge.

Lucknow was one of the few courts which still maintained a manuscript studio during this period, and the Nawab's taste for European art greatly affected the manuscript style. In the 1780s, an important stream of Lucknow painting was a water-colour style with figures all in three-quarter profile (after Tilly Kettle's portrait of Nawab Shujaʿ ad-Daula), with heavy modelling and shadows (always falling to the right), with still occasionally brilliant colouring, but set in a drab, washed out, flat landscape with tiny distant hills dotted with trees under a pale wash of blue for a sky, of a type apparently invented by Mihr Chand in the 1760s. Polier patronized this sort of artist, with a commission for a set of Hindu deities (No. 131). For the next half century this style dominated Lucknow painting, although stronger colours were usually employed. In manuscripts such as the *Gulzār-i Nasīm* (No. 132) and *Nizām ʿIshq-nāma*



132 f.89b. The fairies tell Tāj al-Mulūk at a bathing-pool that his beloved Bakāvalī is in a temple in Ceylon (No. 132, p. 151).